



DMAVA Highlights

September 18, 2008

Volume 8, Number 38

*NJ Dept of Military
and Veterans
Affairs*

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The Adjutant General

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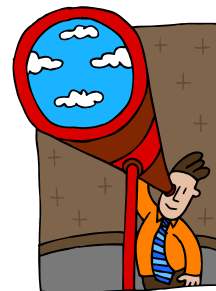
609-530-6951

News For Your Views

50th Finance transforms on Sunday

The Soldiers of the 50th Finance Battalion will be holding a "Casing of the Colors" ceremony on Sunday, Sept. 21 at the Flemington Armory starting at 1 p.m.

The dedicated 50th Finance Battalion Soldiers will take the mission of Financial Support and Service to a new level as the 50th Financial Management Company. At the same ceremony the 150th Finance Detachment will be deactivated.



108th members returning from support of OIF

On Sunday, Sept. 21, the 108th Air Refueling Wing nine members of the Services Flight will be returning from deployment in support of OIF. Family members and leadership are scheduled to meet them upon their arrival at McGuire Air Force Base. Welcome home and thanks for the job well done.

You can still file for your economic stimulus payment!

To help boost the economy, Congress authorized economic stimulus payments of \$300 (\$600 for married couples) for eligible households. To claim your payment, all you have to do is file a 2007 IRS 1040 tax return. Even if you don't usually file a tax form because your income is low, you may want to file one this year so you can claim your \$300 or \$600. More than 150,000 New Jersey residents have yet to claim their payments.

You have until Oct. 15, 2008 to file. Call 1-866-234-2942 for more information, or you can visit our Web site – www.nj.gov/military - and check out the information located under the Hot News banner.

South Jersey Stand Down, Oct. 3

The 2008 South Jersey Stand Down will be held on Oct. 3 in the Cherry Hill armory, 8 a.m.-1 p.m. This event serves homes veterans and their families, providing a broad array of free services and assistance.

Federal, state, public and private support agencies will provide such things as – Veterans benefit counseling, PTSD counseling, mental health, welfare, social services, food stamps, legal services, addiction services, housing, medical, employment, unemployment, haircuts and clothing provisions. Pre-registration and transportation arrangements are encouraged. Call 800-464-8387 for assistance.

Essex Troop will hold holiday party on Dec. 13

The Essex Troop Christmas party will be held at Zeris Restaurant, 372 Route 46, Mountain Lakes, on Dec. 13. Details will follow.

New service announced for wounded warriors, families, caregivers

New Service Announced for Wounded Warriors, Families and Caregivers

DoD announced recently that the Military OneSource service has established a

We're on the Web!
www.nj.gov/military



Veterans' Organizations

Contact Information

State Veterans Service
Council
Mr. Richard Clark
RJClark21@msn.com

BG William C. Doyle
Cemetery Advisory
Council
Mr. William Rakestraw
warjrnj@msn.com

Veterans Hotlines



Benefits &
Entitlements
1-888-8NJ-VETS
(1-888-865-8387)

Mental Health
1-866-VETS-NJ4U
(1-866-838-7654)

Wounded Warrior Resource Center telephone number and e-mail address for service members and their families, if they have concerns or other difficulties during their recovery process.

Service members and their family members can now call (800) 342-9647 or e-mail wwrc@militaryonesource.com 24/7 to request support. Assistance provided by the resource center will not replace the specialized wounded warrior programs established by each of the military services, but it will offer another avenue of assistance for military facilities, health care services, and/or benefits information.

"The department is committed to aggressively addressing the needs of our service members and their families," said Secretary of Defense Robert M. Gates.

Specially trained consultants will ensure consistent, quality customer-centric support. The consultants will identify the appropriate "warm hand-off" to either a military service or federal agency with authority to resolve the matter. The resource center consultant will maintain communication with the caller until the issue or concern is resolved.

"The term 'wounded warrior' encompasses the entire population of wounded, ill and injured service members and veterans," said Principal Deputy Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness Michael L. Dominguez.

The Wounded Warrior Resource Center meets the requirements of Section 1616 of the "National Defense Authorization Act Fiscal Year 2008" for a centralized number and ensures wounded families and caregivers have a number to call at any time.

For Your Calendar

Job fair for veterans, Guard members, spouses

From the desk of Mary Beth Miller, RecruitMilitary

RecruitMilitary will be hosting two Career Fairs in the New York/New Jersey area in September. The fairs are hosted in cooperation with HireVets First and the American Legion to benefit all military veterans, transitioning personnel, members of the Guard and Reserve, and military spouses in the New York City and Newark, N.J. areas.

The New York City Career Fair will be held on **Sept. 24** from 11 a.m.-3 p.m. at Madison Square Garden. A flyer that you can print, post, and forward to anyone that may benefit from this free event can be found at: www.recruitmilitary.com/brochures/9-24-08_new%20york_candidate_pr.pdf

The Newark Career Fair will be held on **Sept. 25** from 11 a.m.-3 p.m. at the Prudential Center (Home of the New Jersey Devils). The flyer for this event can be found at: www.recruitmilitary.com/brochures/09-25-08_northern%20new%20jersey_candidate_pr.pdf.

Job seekers who would like to pre-register for either (or both) events can go to - NYC: www.recruitmilitary.com/careerfairs/careerfairs3.asp?CFID=132, or Newark: www.recruitmilitary.com/careerfairs/careerfairs3.asp?CFID=134.

Retirements, Reunions

Retirement dinner for Chief Terry Young, Oct. 24

A retirement dinner will be held on Friday, Oct. 24 to honor Chief Master Sgt. Terry E. Young at Mastoris, 144 Route 130, Bordentown. Cocktails start at 5:30 p.m. and dinner will be served at 6 p.m.

Chief Young is retiring from the New Jersey Air National Guard after more than 40 years of service. He started his career in the active duty Air Force and joined the New Jersey Air National Guard in 1972, serving as a member of the 177th Fighter Wing, 108th Air Refueling Wing and Joint Force Headquarters. He will continue working in his civilian job as an auditor for the Air Force Audit Agency, Dover, De.

NJ World War II Memorial



For information or to
make a donation, call
609-530-7049



Please
submit any
articles and
all
information
for *DMAVA*
Highlights

to:

PAO Office
DMAVA Highlights
ATTN:
Staff Sgt. Barbara
Harbison

DEADLINE IS
NOON
WEDNESDAY

Tech. Sgt. Barbara
Harbison
Barbara.harbison@njdmava.state.nj.us

Cost for the event is \$30 and RSVP must be in by Oct. 16. Contact Connie Cisek, 609-562-0901 or Senior Master Sgt. Bonnie Gaskell, 609-562-0925 for more information. Dress for the evening is civilian business attire.

117th Cav holding Biennial reunion Oct. 18

The 117th Cavalry Association will be holding their 2008 Biennial Reunion on **Oct. 18** at Gibbs Hall, Fort Monmouth, where they will honor those who have served and those who continue to serve.

The cocktail hour will be from 6-7 p.m. and dinner will be served at 7 p.m. Cost will be \$50 per person if the reservation is received before Aug. 15; \$55 per person thereafter. Meal choices will be chicken francaise, prime rib or stuffed flounder.

There will also be a member appreciation get-together on Oct. 17 at 7 p.m. in the Westfield Armory Heritage Room; spouses and guests are welcome.

Send money and reservations to Col. (ret.) Dennis J. Dougherty, 615 Raymond St., Westfield NJ 07090 by Sept. 15.



Say Again?

NJARNG looking to fill their soccer team

From the desk of Master Sgt. Alex Estrada

The New Jersey Army National Guard is looking for soccer players to play during the (FY) 2008-2009 indoor season at the International Sports Center at Cherry Hill, N.J. For anyone interested in joining the team, contact Sgt. Jose Castro at 609-562-0234 or jose.castro4@us.army.mil or Master Sgt. Alex Estrada at 609-562-0568 or alexandro.estrada@us.army.mil for further information.

Sign up for G-RAP and make \$\$\$\$

Sign up today and earn up to \$2,000 for each new recruit who enlists into the National Guard and reports to basic training.

The Guard Recruiting Assistance Program (G-RAP) is a contracted program designed for individuals who voluntarily apply to become eligible to serve as a part-time Recruiting Assistant (RA).

G-RAP is available to Traditional Guard members and National Guard retirees. This opportunity is open to both Army and Air Guard members. For more information, go to <http://www.guardrecruitingassistant.com/>.

Army has new Web site to aid those who want to help

The U.S. Army has put up a web site to facilitate donations from the public to help soldiers and their families at <http://giftstoarmy.army.mil>. While the Army states very clearly that they are not soliciting contributions they are providing lots of information on how to make donations in areas of concern, such as Soldiers and families, Wounded Warriors and Army installations.

Joyce Morrow, the administrative assistant to the Secretary of the Army, explained: "Many individuals have asked how they can help the Army. We appreciate how generous the public is and the concern they have for the welfare of our soldiers and families. We've developed this Web site to provide information on how to contribute money, goods or services to benefit Soldiers and their Families." [Source: TREA Washington Update, Aug. 29, 2008]

Honor Guard program wants YOU!

Looking for a way to serve and get some satisfaction at the same time? The Honor Guard program is looking for members of the Army and Air Guard to join the team to perform honor guard duties at the funerals of veterans. There is an initial eight hours of training for all new enrollees, with on-going sustainment training. As an honor

Wounded
Soldier and
Family
Hotline
1-800-984-
8523

Phone
numbers and
Web sites to
remember

Directory
Assistance:

1-602-293-4907

Verizon Super Pages:
<http://www.superpages.com/>

AT&T:
<http://www.anywho.com/>

SBC Yellow Pages:
<http://www.yellowpages.com/>

Telephone and
contact information
on state employees
can be found at
<http://njdirect.state.nj.us/>

DMAVA
Emergency
Hotline:

1-866-232-5798

guard member, you will receive a day of pay for each day's mission, minimum of \$50, and traditional drilling Guard members receive a retirement point for each day's duties.

If you are interested in applying for the Honor Guard program, call retired Sgt. Maj. Ed Goetschius at 609-530-7090.

Reduced rates on NJ Transit for military, dependents

Here is another benefit offered to military members, retirees and their dependents by the state of New Jersey.

Eligible passengers may ride at reduced fare rates on any NJ Transit bus, rail or light rail service at all times, without restriction, upon presentation of authorized identification.

All military personnel and their dependents will be permitted to purchase transportation at the senior citizen/passengers with disabilities reduced fare rate upon showing their military or military dependent ID card. The following military personnel are entitled to this fare: Active Duty, Reserve, National Guard or Retired for Army, Navy, Air Force, Marines or Coast Guard.

Information for N.J. state employees

Pension loan applications to be submitted through MBOS

From the desk of Lisa Dandrea, Human Resources, Personnel Assistant

NOTICE from the Division of Pensions and Benefits:

Effective Nov. 1, 2008, an eligible member who wishes to borrow against their pension account, MUST submit the loan request through the Pension Loan Application accessible through a personal account with the Member Benefits Online System (MBOS). Please note the following changes:

- ❖ The *Loan Application* will no longer be available as a printed form or through the Division's Web site.
- ❖ Paper *Loan Applications* that are received by mail as of Nov. 1, 2008, will be returned to members with instructions on submitting the loan request through MBOS.
- ❖ The loan fax number, which has been phased out of use since the introduction of loans through MBOS, will be completely disabled.
- ❖ Limited access to a computer or a member's reluctance to use MBOS **will not** be considered sufficient circumstances to allow manual loan processing.

Employees who are already registered MBOS users currently have access to the online loan application through their MBOS account.

Employees who are new to MBOS can access MBOS after they register with both the *MyNewJersey* Web site and MBOS. Registration is free; however, the registration process requires several steps and new users should carefully follow the MBOS registration instructions. Visit <http://www.state.nj.us/treasury/pensions/mbosregister.htm> for a complete list of instructions. If, after following the MBOS Registration Instructions, you still need assistance registering for or using MBOS, please contact the MBOS Help Desk at (609) 777-0534 or send an e-mail with the subject line "MBOS E-mail" to: pensions.nj@treas.state.nj.us

Looking for volunteers to assist in emergencies at DMAVA offices

From the desk of Paul Serdiuk, Training Coordinator

We are looking for volunteers within the DMAVA Central Office complex who would be willing to be trained in Adult CPR and Automatic External Defibrillator (AED) application should an emergency arise within offices. You would receive this free training and, in turn, agree to apply the skills learned if an emergency situation should arise at the central office. Training would be held sometime in the latter part of September. We would like to train at least two individuals from each section in CPR/AED. Contact me at 609-530-6878 if you are willing to volunteer for this life-saving training.

If you have not yet noticed, the AED units are up and ACTIVE on the first and second

ESGR office
JFHQ
3650 Saylor's Pond
Road
Fort Dix, NJ 08641
Hank Pierre, 609-
562-0156,
hank.pierre@njdma
va.state.nj.us
Tammy Cartagena,
609-562-0157,
tammy.l.cartagena
@us.army.mil
Fax
609-562-0158

floors in the fire hose cabinets. Please do not touch the units as an alarm will sound when they have been disturbed.

Employees required to register for MBOS

From the desk of Lisa J. Dandrea, Human Resources, Personnel Assistant

MBOS is the Member Benefits Online System. Through MBOS, employees may review their pension contributions, loan status, health benefits information, update their beneficiary information, apply for retirement, as well as many other applications. It has been encouraged that all employees register for this helpful tool. However Pensions is now working on MBOS being a requirement in order for employees to make certain updates to their personal information.

Effective immediately, in all cases where an employee is eligible to become a member of the Public Employees' Retirement System (PERS), the employer will be required to submit all enrollment information to Pensions via online. Important to note is that the online PERS Enrollment Application does not include the Designation of Beneficiary page. Instead, once the member is enrolled and issued a pension number, they must register for a MBOS account at: www.state.nj.us/treasury/pensions/mbosregister.htm and complete the online Beneficiary Designation form. Until the member completes his or her Designation of Beneficiary, the member's "Estate" will be the beneficiary of record.

Current employees –note, even if you are already enrolled into PERS, if you wish to make any changes to your beneficiary information, you too will need to be registered for MBOS. Members will not be able to submit the Change in Beneficiary Designation paper form since this will no longer be acceptable through the Division of Pensions and Benefits.

Visit the link above for complete instructions to register for MBOS. If you encounter any problems with registration, you may e-mail Pensions and Benefits with your questions/concerns and they can assist you through the process. You may also obtain a tri-fold brochure with MBOS instructions from your Human Resources Office.

No handbooks available for NJDIRECT

Inquiries about NEW handbooks and directories for NJDIRECT has prompted this reply from Pensions and Benefits:

"Unfortunately, we do not have NJ Direct Handbooks to give to members and will not be receiving a supply. Members may visit the NJ Direct website www.horizonblue.com/shbp. Members without computers are encouraged to use their local library or a relative's computer or call the plan directly".

You may also look up benefit information and visit the Unified Provider Directory on the Pensions and Benefits website under State Health Benefits Program.

State employees who move, marry must contact HR department

From the desk of Lisa Dandrea, Human Resources, Personnel Assistant

If you are a state employee, working for DMAVA, Vets Haven, and the Cemetery, and you have an address change and/or a name change, it is *extremely* important that you contact Lisa Dandrea in the Human Resources Office. There have been a lot of issues with tax W2s, pension statements and pay checks being returned to our office, as well as some employees not receiving their new health cards, all due to incorrect addresses. Your address change is not automatic and it is not limited to completing a new W4. There are specific forms for employees to complete that updates their new information statewide. Your change of address or name affects your paycheck, your pension statements, W2s, loans, any information sent out by your health care provider, promotional announcements from Dept. of Personnel, etc. If you have had an address/name change and have not updated your information, please make sure you contact Lisa Dandrea in HRD-ESB at 609-530-6888 or e-mail Lisa.Dandrea@njdmava.state.nj.us.

Discounts offered for State employees

QUOTES

Facts are stubborn things.

-Ronald Reagan

Observe all men, thyself most.

- Benjamin Franklin

He who commits injustice is ever made more wretched than he who suffers it.

- Plato

The supreme happiness of life is the conviction that we are loved.

- Victor Hugo

No revenge is more honorable than the one not taken.

- Spanish Proverb

Are you a state employee looking to save a few \$\$\$?

Visit www.state.nj.us/personnel/discounts/index.htm and you can find a number of businesses who offer discounts to New Jersey state employees. From amusement parks to fitness to computer to phones and lots of other discounts between, you will find many ways to save money. For more information, please contact Cindy Leese at cindy.leese@njdmava.state.nj.us or call 609-530-7056.

For the Families

Grants available for families with special needs children, adults

Applications are being accepted through the Quality of Life grant program for families that care for children and adults with autism and other special needs. These grants provide families with stipends that may be used for a wide variety of support related to their family member. To be considered for a Quality of Life grant, an applicant must:

- Have an individual with a diagnosed developmental disorder or disability living at home;
- Live in the mid-Atlantic region of the U.S.: Va., D.C., Md., De., Pa., N.J. and N.Y., and
- Submit a legible and complete application via the Neighbor Heart website or by U.S. Postal Service postmarked by Nov. 1, 2008.

Quality of Life grants are \$500 per approved individual and apply to anything that improves a family's quality of life, to include: remediation; occupational, physical, speech, equine and behavior therapy; security improvements; medical travel; respite care; membership and registration fees; educational and training seminars; educational advocacy; vision services; and other medical services.

To apply for a grant, visit <http://www.neighborheart.org/grants.asp>.

Click and find out which FAC supports your armory

If you are not sure which Family Assistance Center supports your armory, here is the way to find out. By going to the new and growing New Jersey FAC Web site you will be able to locate the FAC nearest you. It also gives you a place to e-mail your questions and concerns. Just go to <http://www.nj-fac.org>.

Education program available for families of mentally ill veterans

The Veterans Health Administration and the National Alliance on Mental Illness have teamed to provide the Family-to-Family Education Program for families of veterans with mental illness. In June 2008 the VA and NAMI entered into a nation-wide partnership to bring the course to all VA Healthcare systems.

The NAMI Family to Family Education Program (FFEP), a free 12-week course for family caregivers of individuals with severe mental illness, will now be offered at VA New Jersey Health Care System locations starting in September 2008.

The course includes: Current information about schizophrenia, major depression, bipolar disorder, panic disorder, obsessive-compulsive disorder, borderline personality disorder, posttraumatic stress disorder, and co-occurring brain disorders and addictive disorders; current research and treatments to promote recovery; up-to-date information about medications, side effects, and strategies for medication adherence; gaining empathy for a person with mental illness; learning skills for handling crises and relapse; coping with care giver worry, stress, and emotional overload; and guidance on locating and advocating for appropriate supports and services for your family.

NAMI New Jersey and VA New Jersey Health Care System invite families to join us for the class starting Sept. 23 at the Lyons campus. Classes will be on twelve Tuesdays from 7–9:30 p.m. For information/registration contact Marilyn at 908-806-3475.



Additional dental cleaning allowed during pregnancy by Tricare

The TRICARE Management Activity announced an enhancement to maternity dental benefit through United Concordia. An additional cleaning in a 12-month period will now be allowed at no additional cost for all pregnant TRICARE Dental Program enrollees. The additional cleaning is in response to research indicating there is an increase risk of dental disease during pregnancy. For more information about dental health during pregnancy, go to: http://www.ada.org/public/topics/pregnancy_faq.asp.

Support for military children of deployed and injured Guard members

From the desk of retired Command Sgt. Maj. Mike Hughes, Family Assistance specialist

Our Military Kids (OMK) provides tangible support to the children of deployed and severely injured National Guard and Military Reserve personnel through grants for enrichment activities and tutoring that nurture and sustain the children during the time a parent is away in service to our country. OMK grants are made to honor the sacrifices military parents make and to ensure that the children have access to activities and support that help the children better cope with challenges arising during a parent's deployment or injury recovery. For additional information go to www.ourmilitarykids.org

No-cost prescription savings plan available

From the desk of Marie Durling, Family Programs Specialist

Here is a no cost to you prescription savings program. This program offers discounts on all generic prescription medications at your local pharmacy. You do not have to do anything special to qualify. There is no income, residence, employment, age, citizenship or any other qualifications to meet. Not even an application to fill out. The Family State Programs Office at Joint Force Headquarters, Fort Dix has the group ID cards. Call Marie Durling at 609-562-0739 and one will be mailed to you. For more information check out www.mediservrx.com.

During the Deployment Information

Federal grant for spouses of deployed military

Grants from a funding from the Department of Community Affairs are available for spouses of deployed or recently deployed military (all branches across the state). Typical awards are \$2,500 each and are available for financial difficulties (such as past due rent and childcare) as well as for recreational and stress relieving activities for kids. For more information contact Rene Mainor, Military Grant Liaison, Women's Opportunity Center, YMCA of Burlington County by calling 609-543-6200 Ext. 235 or by email at fawnm@ymca-bc.org.

N.J. Family Readiness Council increases grants to families, businesses

The New Jersey National Guard State Family Readiness Council has increased the amounts of family and business grants up to \$5,000 and \$10,000, respectively. Both are what are known as TIER I grants. TIER II family grants are also available to New Jersey Army and Air National Guard non-deployed service members who were on State Active Duty or State Missions (e.g., hurricanes, floods, border missions) for more than 20 consecutive days. Service members meeting these criteria are eligible to apply for a financial hardship grant up to \$1,500. Applications are available at all New Jersey Army and Air National Guard Family Assistance Centers.

Hero Packs to children of deployed military

From the desk of Amanda Balas, State Youth Coordinator

Hero Packs are Operation Military Kids backpacks filled with a variety of items from the OMK partner agencies, which are given to military youth as a "Thank You" for the sacrifices that they make while their loved ones are deployed.

Across the nation, OMK has presented Hero Packs to more than 45,000 military youth since 2004. Hero Packs contain a variety of items intended to provide children with fun

activities and ways to stay connected to their deployed parents. In addition, information is provided to parents regarding local support programs for children and families.

Here in New Jersey we will be having Hero Pack Ceremonies for children and youth who have a deployed loved one starting this month at various armories across the state. Youth will be presented with a certificate and Hero Pack and then will be able to enjoy a snack and juice after the ceremony with their friends and family. There are four events scheduled, with more to be added.

Sept. 27, 1 p.m. – Freehold armory

Oct. 11, 10 a.m. – Mt. Holly armory

Oct. 14, 6:30 p.m. – Woodbury armory

Oct. 18, 10 a.m. – Jersey City armory

If you would like your child to participate and receive a Hero Pack, contact Amanda Balas at 609-562-0742, 1-888-859-0352, Amanda.balas@us.army.mil or amandabalas@hotmail.com. Permission slips for the event must be completed and sent to the office no later than two weeks prior to the event.

New laws for state, local elections and absentee ballots

Governor Jon S. Corzine signed legislation on Tuesday, August 12, at the West Orange armory that expanded voting rights for military personnel and New Jersey citizens overseas to include state and local elections. Previously, this group of voters could only vote by overseas absentee ballot in federal elections. The new legislation corrects a flaw in the law and permits greater participation in the electoral process.

"The right to vote is the most fundamental element of any democracy," Governor Corzine said. "I could not be more proud to sign this legislation to ensure that those who have sacrificed so much to protect our rights have the opportunity to participate fully in the electoral process."

In addition to expanding voting rights, the bill also expands the methods of transmitting ballots used by overseas voters who wish to vote. Current law only allows votes to be transmitted by fax, but this legislation expands the ability to submit votes by any form of electronic communication, including e-mail. In order to ensure the integrity of the voting process, a paper copy of the ballot must also be submitted for verification purposes after the transmittal of the electronic ballot.

Picatinny "Waiting Family Support Group" open to new members

From the desk of Doris Clark, Picatinny Arsenal

The Hearts Apart Support Group known as Waiting Family Support Group is sponsored by Picatinny Arsenal Army Community Service to help families cope with geographical separation due to deployment, accompanied tour or extended temporary duty. The group meets monthly and provides emotional and moral support to its members in a friendly relaxed atmosphere. This group is open to all branches of service. Come join us for great information, laughs, tears and be a part of the Waiting Family. The group meets monthly at 7 p.m. in the Community Center (building 3225) Picatinny Arsenal, N.J.

Point of contact for this group is Doris Clark, Relocation/Deployment Readiness, 973-724-5219. RSVP in case non-identification holders need permission to access Picatinny Arsenal. Mark your calendars. Please join us for great evening each month. Call with any questions regarding the group.

The remaining schedule for 2008 is: **Sept. 25, Oct. 23, Nov. 20 and Dec. 18.**

Give parents a break

Child Youth Services at Fort Dix and many other active duty posts provide 16 hours per child per month of free hourly/respite child care to relieve family stress during deployment. Respite care begins 30 days prior to deployment and ends 60 days after return. Drop off the kids while shopping at the commissary or PX or just to get some quiet time to yourself. For additional information, contact Cathy Spiegel at Fort Dix Outreach Services 609-562-2242.

Dog Tags for Kids program

Dog Tags for Kids is a grassroots project which enables service members to send engraved dog tags to their children. The dog tags are provided free and are sent directly to the service members who personally send them to their children at home. The dog tags are engraved with "With Love From Dad/Mom" and include the branch of service, deployment location, and the year. To donate to the project or to request a dog tag for your children, please go to <http://www.dogtagsforkids.com/>.

Child care \$\$\$\$ available for spouses of deployed military

From the desk of Amanda Balas, State Youth Coordinator

Child care money is available for spouses of Title 10 Army National Guard activated Soldiers only. If the spouses are employed, seeking employment (for 60 days) or going to school, they can qualify for a \$100 per month per child stipend for fulltime care (licensed child care provider required). Call the National Guard Child Care Program today to apply 1-888-642-2799 or ngccp@guardfamily.org.

FRG volunteers needed

Family Readiness Groups (FRG) play an important role during deployments.

Yet, in order to be successful, these groups rely on the support of volunteers.

FRGs are comprised of volunteers who donate their time to make sure our Soldier's "Homefront Heroes" are supported through networking with other family members and mutually offering support to one another.

If you would like to be a volunteer or a participant please contact your local Family Assistance Center. You can reach them by calling our toll free number 888-859-0352 and selecting the prompt of the Family Assistance Center near you.

Reserve Aid gives support to families of deployed service members

From the desk of retired Command Sgt. Maj. Mike Hughes, Family Assistance Specialist

Reserve Aid is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization committed to providing financial support to the families of Reserve Service Members called to active duty in all five branches of the Armed Forces. Reserve Aid makes unrestricted, need based grants to military families who have a Reserve service member on full-time deployment to a combat zone or homeland security position. Their goal is to alleviate the emotional and financial burdens placed on the men and women called to serve our country by supporting their families at home. For additional information and application procedures go to: www.reserveaid.org

Federal absentee voting open to military, family

The Uniformed And Overseas Citizens Absentee Voting Act (UOCAVA) allows the following U.S. citizens to vote absentee:

- Members of the U.S. Uniformed Services (on active duty) and merchant marine,
- Their family members, and
- U.S. citizens residing outside the U.S.

Members of the U.S. Uniformed Services or merchant marine and their family members may vote absentee while away from their place of voting residence, wherever stationed, inside or outside the United States.

U.S. citizens residing outside the United States and its territories may vote in the state or territory where they last resided immediately prior to departing the United States, even if many years have elapsed and the citizen maintains no residence in the state or territory and the intent to return to that state or territory may not be certain.

1. <http://www.fvap.gov/pubs/onlinefpca.pdf>

2. <http://www.fvap.gov/pubs/vag.html#ch3>

N.J. licenses, registration extended for deployed troops

New Jerseyans who are on active duty military, in the National Guard or the military reserves, serving in the war on terrorism, are eligible for automatic extensions of a valid driver license, registration or inspection expiration dates. Go to www.nj.gov/mvc/ for more information.

Battlemind supports Soldiers, families through deployment cycle

Battlemind is a term used to describe combat readiness. The first Battlemind product was a mental health post-deployment briefing. It quickly became a training system supporting Soldiers and families across the seven phases of the deployment cycle. The Battlemind system includes separate pre-deployment training modules for Soldiers, unit leaders, health-care providers and spouses. Psychological debriefings are given in theater and upon redeployment. There is also a post-deployment module for spouses and several post-deployment modules for Soldiers. Pre-deployment Battlemind tells Soldiers what they are likely to see, to hear, to think and to feel while deployed - by describing the worst-case scenario. Post-deployment Battlemind addresses safety concerns, relationship issues, normalized combat-related mental health reactions and symptoms -- along with teaching Soldiers when they should seek mental health support for themselves or for their buddies. All of the Battlemind products (training modules, brochures, debriefings and videos are available on the Web site, www.battlemind.org.

Financial counseling available for deployed service members

From the desk of retired Command Sgt. Maj. Mike Hughes, Family Assistance Specialist

The Military Housing Assistance Fund (MHAF) helps military families to become homeowners by providing them with grants to assist them with purchasing a home. The Fund also provides financial counseling to members of the National Guard and Reserves, deployed and serving in combat zones overseas, which are having problems meeting their monthly obligations due to their deployment and activation. Learn more at <http://www.militaryhousingassistancefund.org>. The Fund is a project of the Financial Counselors of America (FCA), a 501(c) 3 nonprofit organization founded in 1991 to help Americans manage their finances and get out of debt. Visit the FCA website at <http://www.financialcounselors.org>.

Order a complimentary Blue Star Flag to show your family's service

From the desk of retired Command Sgt. Maj. Mike Hughes, Family Assistance Specialist

The Blue Star Flag first appeared in 1917, when Capt. Robert L. Queissner, who had two sons serving on the front line, designed it as a tribute to their dedication and service. He proudly displayed this flag in the front window of his home and the flag quickly became the unofficial symbol of a child in the service. Also known as a Service Flag, the blue star stands for hope and pride. Order a complimentary Blue Star Flag to honor your loved ones in the service by visiting: www.grantham.edu/promo/freebluestar.php.

Morris County offers program for military families

From the desk of Amanda Balas, State Youth Coordinator

Family Service of Morris County in partnership with the Family Programs Office, New Jersey, would like to announce its Military Families Outreach Program. Based on a community effort, the Military Families Outreach Program strives to support Morris County military personnel and their families, including extended families, pre-deployment, during deployment and post-deployment.

We realize the pressures and problems that may occur when a family member is called to duty, and we want to assist with any services that you may need to ensure quality of life. Social services, support services and mental health services are some of the resources that will be available to Morris County residents. All services offered in this program are free of charge to you and your family and are bound by the highest consideration for complete confidentiality.

For more information about the Military Services Outreach Program, contact Wendy Parrinello, Military Families Outreach Case Manager at wparrinello@fsmc.org or call 973-538-5260, extension 326. You can also contact Tammy Rosenthal, Director of child and Adolescent Services at trosenthal@fsmc.org or 973-538-5260. We are privileged to work with you who have given so much for your country!

Post Office offers boxes, discount rate to FPO/APO addresses

From the desk of retired Command Sgt. Maj. Mike Hughes, Family Assistance Specialist

Now the U.S. Postal Service is making it easier for families to send care packages with a larger flat rate box and a special discount to FPO/ APO addresses. They are 50 percent larger than the current flat rate box and can be sent to any domestic address for \$12.95. A special military version of the box will carry the "America Supports You" logo and can be shipped to any FPO/ APO address for \$10.95. The new Priority Mail Large Flat-Rate Box is "12 x 12" x 5½". For complete guidelines on mail services to military members overseas visit the USPS website at: www.usps.com/supporting-outroops/welcome.htm?from=household &page=troopsupport.

Sports

Motorcycle run will benefit new home for disabled vet

Do you ever wonder how groups start raising funds for a specific idea?

Is there someone who sits around brainstorming all day? Here is the story behind how a group is raising funds to build a home for a disabled veteran.

A New Jerseyan who is a member of the Patriot Guard Riders went on a mission last fall to escort home a young wounded Marine from Walter Reed Hospital to his home in New Jersey. The Marine had lost both legs and four fingers on one hand. The escorts had the opportunity to briefly meet the young man and thank him before the trip home where many of the local residents of the town were there to welcome him home.



On his way home, this Patriot Guard Rider, who is also a member of the Western Monmouth Habitat for Humanity committee, wondered what the community could do for disabled veterans. Within a week he contacted the committee leader suggesting a goal to raise the money to build a house for a disabled veteran. The request went through channels, was approved and this is the request for support for the cause.

On **Oct. 5**, WMHFH will hold the 9th Annual Motorcycle Ride for Affordable Housing. This year's beneficiary will be "Habitat for a Disabled Veteran." Registration and check in for the ride will be from 9-10:45 a.m. at Lowes Freehold Metroplex Theater, 101 Trotters Way, Freehold, N.J. The ride starts at 11 a.m.

The 1½ hour ride will go through Monmouth and Ocean counties and end in Colts Neck and have food provided by the Cabin and Catering by Alex. Pre-register by Oct. 3 and the cost is \$20 for driver and \$10 for passenger; after Oct. 3, cost is \$25 for driver and \$15 for passenger. Of the money raised, 100 percent of the net proceeds will go towards building a Habitat home for a disabled veteran.

A commemorative ride pin will be given to the first 500 pre-registered participants. Gifts will be given to those who raise money in sponsorships. For \$50 or more – a special event T-shirt; for \$100 or more – HFH sweat shirt and T-shirt; \$500 or more – custom event denim jacket, sweatshirt and T-shirt; and, \$1,000 or more – custom event leather jacket, sweatshirt and T-shirt.

Rain date for the event is Oct. 12. For more information, call Tom at 732-528-7590 or James at 609-259-6459 or go to www.westmonhabitat.org and click on motorcycle ride page. The registration form is online.

ESGR golf outing postponed until Oct. 11

The N.J. Friends of the Guard and Reserve's 2008 State Chairman's Annual Golf Outing

has been postponed until **Oct. 11**. The golf outing will be held at the Falcon Creek Golf Course, McGuire Air Force Base. The \$95 per golfer registration fee includes greens fees, cart, registration, continental breakfast, food and beverages on the course, door prizes and a buffet luncheon at the McGuire Club. Corporate, hole and cart sponsors are being sought also. All proceeds to benefit the activities of the N.J. Committee for Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve. If you were not available for the original date, but can play on Oct. 11, there is still space available. Contact Hank Pierre at 609-562-0156, Tammy Cartagena at 609-562-0157 or Tyler Sandford at 609-562-0155 to reserve your space.

Travel Help, Ideas



Guard history lessons for family at Sea Girt museum

Looking for a local place to take the family for a history lesson? Try the National Guard Museum of New Jersey in Sea Girt.

The museum had a recent face-lift and upgraded its exhibits which tell the story of the New Jersey Army and Air National Guards and the Naval Militia of New Jersey from the Revolutionary war to the Global War on

Terrorism.

The four gallery rooms feature diaries, uniforms, vehicles, weapons and even a Civil War submarine built in 1865.

Open from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m., Monday through Friday and the same hours on the first and second weekends of the month, admission to the museum is free of charge, but a donation is requested. Groups who would like to make arrangements for tours should call 732-974-5966.

Free tickets to Busch Adventure Parks for military, families

Any active duty, activated or drilling reservist, or National Guardsman is entitled to free admission to a Anheuser-Busch Adventure Park under the Here's to the Heroes program. He or she need only register, either by going to this Web site <http://www.herosalute.com/> and submitting his or her information or in the entrance plaza of participating parks, and show a Department of Defense photo ID. As many as three direct dependents of military personnel also are entitled to free admission. Dependents may take advantage of the offer without their service member, though an adult must accompany minor dependents, and dependent ages 10 and over must present valid dependent I.D. Busch Gardens Williamsburg and SeaWorld San Antonio are seasonal operations that will remain closed until spring 2008. Military personnel interested in visiting those parks should check operating schedules. The remaining parks, SeaWorld Orlando, Busch Gardens Tampa Bay and SeaWorld San Diego are open year round.

Valid for one complimentary single-day admission per person, per year, to one of the following Anheuser-Busch Adventure Parks: SeaWorld Orlando, San Diego, or San Antonio, Busch Gardens Tampa Bay or Williamsburg, Sesame Place, Water Country USA, Adventure Island. Not valid at Discovery Cove and Aquatica.

Armed Forces Vacation Club offers affordable lodging



The Armed Forces Vacation Club is a "space available" program offering Department of Defense affiliated personnel affordable condominium vacations at over 3,500 resorts around the world. Visit www.afvclub.com/ for more information.

Scholarship, Education News

Help available to students studying for SAT/ACT

In cooperation with the Department of Defense, eKnowledge Corporation, a leading supplier of interactive test preparation products for college entrance exams, along with a group of NFL players, have donated more than \$16 million worth of multimedia SAT/ACT Test Preparation products to service members and their families worldwide.

Now in its fourth year, the eKnowledge/NFL player sponsorship effort has shipped more than 90,000 free SAT/ACT test preparation programs, valued at \$200, to military servicemembers and their families.

The eKnowledge SAT and ACT test prep programs come in either a single DVD or two CD-ROM set that include more than 11 hours of high quality video training/instruction with up to 40 hours of student interactive learning participation. The SAT and ACT test prep programs can be used as a stand-alone instruction tool to prepare thoroughly for the SAT and ACT, or as a supplement to other SAT and ACT preparation materials. Each student can select the areas where they need additional or special training/instruction, and can then study at their own pace using the 120 video lessons which comprise the SAT and Act test prep programs. The program also provides the student with feedback on their learning progress, test readiness and more.

Those military families interested in receiving free eKnowledge products under this sponsorship can complete an online request form at <http://eknowledge.com/military> or visit the Department of Defense <http://militaryhomefront.dod.mil> Web site for more details. Copies can also be requested by calling 951-256-4076 or via e-mail at support@eknowledge.com.

Education news for NJARNG

Education Services Brochure Booklet (ESB2)

Access the New Jersey Army National Guard's ESB2 at www.nj.gov/military/education. The ESB2 is a comprehensive guide with links and shortcuts to civilian education benefits available to New Jersey Army National Guard Soldiers.

G.I. Bill Notice of Basic Eligibility

New Jersey Army National Guard Soldiers can print their Eligibility of Mobilized Soldier notification letter for CH 1607 as well as Notice Of Basic Eligibility for CH 1606 at <https://www.nationalguardbenefits.com>; click on G.I. Bill Home Page.

American Legion offers scholarships, booklet on their Web site

The American Legion has scholarship information on their Web site – www.legion.org – including the 152-page booklet, *Need a Lift*, which is a complete financial aid reference guide for veterans, family members and the American Legion family. When you get on the site, click on "Scholarship Information" in the "Useful Links" block.

Association News

Enlisted Association holding conference Sept. 26-28



It's time for the 2008 Enlisted Association of the National Guard of New Jersey Conference, being held in Atlantic City at the Sheraton Hotel on **Sept. 26-28**. Come see your friends and have fun. The options are unlimited. Come Friday and do your own thing or join the Junior Enlisted sponsoring a hospitality room featuring a "Taste of Atlantic City," with food to match. Saturday, our business meeting is from 10 a.m. until 1 p.m. The Military Ball cocktail hour is 6-7 p.m. and then it's dinner and awards. Have your picture taken by our photographer or visit our Chinese auction. Following the Military Ball, the Junior Enlisted will entertain everyone with "Boogie Nights" in the hospitality room.

To see all that Atlantic City has to offer, visit www.starwoodmeeting.com/book/EANGNJ.

Visit our Web site EANG-NJ.org for the application and to discover more about the conference. For more information, contact Jerome Zebrowski, 609-214-6959, jcptfalc@aol.com, or Edward Goetschius, 609-965-1972, esqtmaj@comcast.net.

117th Cav Association announces meeting schedule

The 117th Cavalry Association, whose mission is to promote and enhance the friendships and camaraderie of our members, who are mutually bound by service and devotion to our country, announces its upcoming meetings. They will be held at 7:30 p.m., at the Westfield Armory's Heritage Room. Meetings will be on **Oct. 17**, **Nov. 7** and the reunion on **Oct. 18** at Fort Monmouth, N.J.

NGANJ group life insurance available to members

Are you covered by the NGANJ Group Life Insurance Program? As a member of either the Officers or the Enlisted Association, you are entitled to enroll in your Association Life Insurance Program. This special program provides from \$5,000 to \$50,000 of Life Insurance for you, "round the clock". Premiums range from as little as \$2 per month and may be payroll-deducted from your drill check. Family coverage is also available at low rates designed for you as a member of the New Jersey Army and Air National Guard. Think of it!! No aviation exclusions...No hazardous duty restrictions...No war clauses...No checks to write. Family coverage includes spouses and all children. Information can be obtained by contacting retired CWO Jack Petrosilli at 609-530-6843, or retired Brig. Gen. Robert S. Dutko Sr. at 609-273-1004. Enrollment forms can be obtained by calling retired Col. Frank L. Carlone, Program Coordinator at 732-249-8335.

Veterans Information

VSO starting outreach on Monmouth University campus

Starting Sept. 16, DMAVA Veterans Service Officer Donald McNamara will be doing outreach work at Monmouth University on the third Tuesday of each month from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. He will be there to provide assistance to veterans and their families, helping them to apply for the benefits for which they are eligible to receive.

Vet Career Connect helps military members find jobs

Vet Career Connect is a program designed to connect military service members with New Jersey employers. Vet Career Connect matches veteran's specific abilities, drives and interests with jobs requiring those specific abilities.

Participants complete a Caliper Profile, which is an on-line self assessment. They will receive an Individual Developmental Guide outlining personal motivators and areas of developmental opportunity. Participants will then have the opportunity to place the results of the Caliper Profile, their resume and military achievements onto a database which will be viewed by New Jersey-based companies who have indicated a strong interest in employing veterans.

Vet Career Connect program is available at no cost to service members. In order to participate in this program, or if you have additional questions please email or call Barbara Foos, Project Administrator, at 609-524-1228 or bfoos@calipercorp.com.

Help for small business owners

If you are ready to start your own business, grow or expand, the U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA) can help. The SBA offers many programs and services to help Veteran entrepreneurs succeed. For more information on how SBA can help you start, grow and build your business, contact: Frank Burke at 973-645-6049 or e-mail frank.burke@sba.gov Visit the SBA New Jersey website at www.sba.gov/nj

VA Suicide Hotline



To ensure veterans with emotional crises have round-the-clock access to trained professionals, the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) has a national suicide prevention hot line for veterans. VA's hot line will be staffed by mental health professionals in Canandaigua, N.Y. They will take toll-free calls from across the country and work closely with local VA mental health providers to help callers. The toll-free hot line number is 1 (800) 273-TALK (8255).

When retiring, check for military service earnings

Here is some information from the Social Security Administration pertaining to military service earnings that may come in handy to those planning on retiring soon. You can find more about this credit at <http://www.ssa.gov/retire2/military.htm>.

Since 1957, if you had military service earnings for active duty, including active duty for training, you paid Social Security taxes on those earnings. Since 1988, inactive duty service in the Armed Forces reserves (such as weekend drills) has also been covered by Social Security.

Under certain circumstances, special extra earnings for your military service from 1957 through 2001 can be credited to your record for Social Security purposes. Special extra earnings credits are NOT given for inactive duty training. These extra earnings credits may help you qualify for Social Security or increase the amount of your Social Security benefit.

If your active military service occurred from 1957-1967, the extra credits will be added to your record when you apply for Social Security benefits. If the time was from 1968-2001, there is no need to do anything for the extra credits; they were automatically added to your record. Time after 2001 receives no special extra earnings.

How much is the credit? For service from 1957-1977, you will be credited with \$300 in additional earnings for each calendar quarter in which you received active duty basic pay. For service from 1978-2001, for every \$300 in active duty basic pay, you are credited with \$100 in earnings up to a maximum in of \$1,200 a year. If you enlisted after Sept. 7, 1980, and did not complete at least 24 months of active duty or your full tour, you may not be able to receive the additional earnings.

Web site provides support to separating military members

TurboTAP (Transition Assistance Program) is an easy to use, interactive Web portal that provides life-long support to separating military service members (Active Duty, Guard and Reserve) and their families. It is a single source starting point for accessing key resources available for servicemembers transitioning out of the military at any point in their military career. Resources include Department of Defense, Department of Labor, Department of Veterans Affairs, Department of Education, Small Business Administration, the National Veterans Corporation and the National Guard Bureau. For more information go to www.TurboTAP.org or email TAPHelp@military-inc.com.

DMAVA Veterans Outreach Campaign continues

The DMAVA Veterans Outreach Campaign continues with kiosk displays at selected malls throughout New Jersey. The schedule is as follows:

October 14*, 15, 16	Menlo Park Mall
November 5*, 6, 7	Deptford Mall

*Medal ceremonies begin at 10:30 a.m. on these dates. The kiosk will be open from 10 a.m. to 8 p.m.

N.J. Vietnam Veterans Memorial

N.J. Vietnam Veterans' Memorial and Vietnam Era Educational Center's upcoming events:

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Free guided tours of the Memorial are offered on the first Saturday of each month at 11 a.m. and 1 p.m.

Sept. 19, 11 a.m. – National POW/MIA Recognition Day and National Gold Star Mothers Day Ceremony at the N.J. Vietnam Veterans' Memorial.

Sept. 21, 12:30 p.m. – Arrival at the N.J. Vietnam Veterans' Memorial by Rolling Thunder-N.J., annual motorcycle run for POW/MIA awareness.

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For further information call 1-800-648-VETS or visit www.njvvmf.org.